

What a great thrill it was to join them the next day in the streets of Yerevan when they were celebrating their great victory. Ninety-eight percent of the people who voted cast their ballots in favor of independence. It was a wonderful experience to be there with them when they danced and sang and shouted, "Ketse azat ankakh Hayastan"—long live free and independent Armenia! That should be the cry of freedom-loving people everywhere.

COMMEMORATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 21, 2005*

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, April 24th, marks the 90th anniversary of the beginning the Armenian Genocide. I rise today to commemorate this terrible chapter in human history, and to help ensure that it will never be forgotten.

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders. Many were executed without ever being charged with crimes. Then the government deported most Armenians from Turkish Armenia, ordering that they resettle in what is now Syria. Many deportees never reached that destination.

From 1915 to 1918, more than a million Armenians died of starvation or disease on long marches, or were massacred outright by Turkish forces. From 1918 to 1923, Armenians continued to suffer at the hands of the Turkish military, which eventually removed all remaining Armenians from Turkey.

We mark this anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide because this tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all humanity. It is our duty to remember, to speak out and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and the oppression and terrible suffering endured by the Armenian people.

We hope the day will soon come when it is not just the survivors who honor the dead but also when those whose ancestors perpetrated the horrors acknowledge their terrible responsibility and commemorate as well the memory of genocide's victims.

Sadly, we cannot say humanity has progressed to the point where genocide has become unthinkable. We have only to recall the "killing fields" of Cambodia, mass killings in Rwanda, "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Kosovo, and most recently, the unspeakable horrors in Darfur, Sudan to see that the threat of genocide persists. We must renew our commitment never to remain indifferent in the face of such assaults on innocent human beings.

We also remember this day because it is a time for us to celebrate the contribution of the Armenian community in America—including hundreds of thousands in California—to the richness of our character and culture. The strength they have displayed in overcoming tragedy to flourish in this country is an example for all of us. Their success is moving testimony to the truth that tyranny and evil cannot extinguish the vitality of the human spirit.

The United States has an ongoing opportunity to contribute to a true memorial to the

past by strengthening Armenia's emerging democracy. We must do all we can through aid and trade to support Armenia's efforts to construct an open political and economic system.

Adolf Hitler, the architect of the Nazi Holocaust, once remarked "Who remembers the Armenians?" The answer is, we do. And we will continue to remember the victims of the 1915–23 genocide because, in the words of the philosopher George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

COMMEMORATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 21, 2005*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, and the representative of a large and vibrant community of Armenian Americans, I rise to join my colleagues in the sad commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

Today we declare to people living in every corner of our globe that the Turkish and American governments must finally acknowledge what we have long understood: that the unimaginable horror committed on Turkish soil in the aftermath of World War I was, and is, an act of genocide.

I strongly believe that the tragic events that began on April 24, 1915, which are well known to all of us, should be part of the history curriculum in every Turkish and American school. On that dark April day, more than 200 of Armenia's religious, political and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople and killed. Ultimately, more than 1.5 million Armenians were systematically murdered at the hands of the Young Turks, and more than 500,000 more were exiled from their native land.

On this 90th anniversary of the beginning of the genocide, we lend our voices to a chorus that grows louder with each passing year. We simply will not allow the planned elimination of an entire people to remain in the shadows of history. The Armenian Genocide must be acknowledged, studied and never, ever allowed to happen again.

The parliaments of Canada, France and Switzerland have all passed resolutions affirming that the Armenian people were indeed subjected to genocide. The United States must do the same. I will not stop fighting until long overdue legislation acknowledging the Armenian Genocide finally passes.

Of course, an acknowledgment of the genocide is not our only objective. I remain committed to ensuring that the U.S. government continues to provide direct financial assistance to Armenia. Over the years, this aid has played a critical role in the economic and political advancement of the Armenian people.

Additionally, it is clearly in our national interest to foster peace and stability in the South Caucasus region. We in Congress need to renew our commitment to Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which denies assistance to Azerbaijan until it ends its stranglehold on the embattled region of Nagorno-Karabagh.

We will not stand by as the Armenian people are threatened yet again.

On this solemn day, our message is clear: the world remembers the Armenian genocide, and the governments of Turkey and the United States must declare—once and for all—that they do, too.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 21, 2005*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the victims of one of history's most terrible tragedies, the Armenian Genocide.

April 24, 1915 is remembered and solemnly commemorated each year by the Armenian community and others throughout the world. On that day, Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople, taken to the interior of Turkey and murdered. From 1915 through 1923, Armenians that lived under Ottoman rule were systematically deprived of their property, freedom, and dignity. In addition, one and a half million Armenians were massacred, with 500,000 more deported.

Despite the efforts of some to minimize the scope and deny the occurrence, the Armenian Genocide is a historical fact. In my district, there is a significant population of Armenian survivors and their families that showed heroic courage and a will to survive. Many of the survivors of the genocide came to the United States, where they and their descendants have contributed to our society in countless ways. With faith and courage, generations of Armenians have overcome great suffering and proudly preserved their culture, traditions, and religion and have told the story of the genocide to an often indifferent world. It is through their unforgettable tragedy that we are able to share in their history and strong heritage. The history of the Armenian Genocide must never be forgotten. As Members of Congress and people of conscience, we must work to overcome the indifference and distortions of history, and ensure that future generations know what happened.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to imagine an evil more forceful than the efforts to systematically wipe out a people and a culture as well as individual lives. Denying that genocide took place when there are recorded accounts of barbarity and ethnic violence is an injustice. This was a tragic event in human history, but by paying tribute to the Armenian community we ensure the lessons of the Armenian genocide are properly understood and acknowledged. I am pleased my colleagues and I have this opportunity to ensure this tragedy is remembered.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**HON. MARK E. SOUDER**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 21, 2005*

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the 90th anniversary of the Armenian